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LOS ANGELES COUNTY
SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE/
INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT TASK FORCE
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April 21, 2014

The Honorable Richard Pan, Chair
Assembly Health Committee
State Capitol, Room 6005
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Assembly Member Pan,

**ASSEMBLY BILL 1893 (AMENDED MARCH 28, 2014) - SUPPORT
SOLID WASTE: HOME-GENERATED SHARPS**

The Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/Integrated Waste Management Task Force (Task Force) **supports** Assembly Bill 1893. If enacted, AB 1893 would require that all hypodermic needles and syringes (sharps) sold to the public in California are sold with a sharps waste container labeled with the words “sharps waste” or with the international biohazard symbol and the word “BIOHAZARD.”

Since 2008, it has been illegal to dispose of home-generated sharps waste in trash or recycling containers, and all sharps waste must be transported to a legal collection center in appropriate sharps containers. However, a large number of sharps are still being disposed of in trash and recycling containers, which presents a dangerous dilemma for thousands of workers every day.

Used sharps can carry infectious and deadly diseases. There are many cases in recent years of solid waste workers and the general public coming into contact with illegally disposed sharps. Being punctured by a used sharp is a painful and stressful experience for the victim and their family, involving many medical visits and blood tests to determine if a long-term or life-threatening disease has been transmitted from the puncture wound. It is also costly for employers and insurers. AB 1893 is a sensible step towards addressing this dangerous dilemma solid waste workers face every day.

Moreover, AB 1893 encourages the Administrative Director of the Division of Workers' Compensation to incorporate the use of specific data elements that identify puncture wounds caused by sharps waste. This would update an antiquated system which does not distinguish puncture wounds caused by sharps from other items such as nails or tree branches.

Pursuant to Chapter 3.67 of the Los Angeles County Code and the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989 (Assembly Bill 939 [AB 939], as amended), the Task Force is responsible for coordinating the development of all major solid waste planning

documents prepared for the County of Los Angeles and the 88 cities in Los Angeles County with a combined population in excess of ten million. Consistent with these responsibilities and to ensure a coordinated and cost-effective and environmentally sound solid waste management system in Los Angeles County, the Task Force also addresses issues impacting the system on a countywide basis. The Task Force membership includes representatives of the League of California Cities-Los Angeles County Division, County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, City of Los Angeles, the waste management industry, environmental groups, the public, and a number of other governmental agencies.

For the foregoing reasons, the Task Force **supports** AB 1893. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Mr. Mike Mohajer of the Task Force at MikeMohajer@yahoo.com or at (909) 592-1147.

Sincerely,



Margaret Clark, Vice-Chair
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/
Integrated Waste management Task Force and
Council Member, City of Rosemead

cc: Assembly Member Mark Stone
Assembly Member Susan Talamantes Eggman
Each Member of the Assembly Health Committee
California Product Stewardship Council
California State Association of Counties
League of California Cities
Each member of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors
San Gabriel Valley Council of Governments
South Bay Cities Council of Governments
Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Westside Cities Council of Governments
Each City Mayor and City Manager in the County of Los Angeles
Each City Recycling Coordinator in Los Angeles County
Each Member of the Los Angeles County Integrated Waste Management Task Force